



SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER ETHICS

The School Board recognizes that there are rules of ethical conduct for public officials and employees that extend beyond the responsibilities and duties delegated by law.

The following principles of conduct will serve as a guide for the official conduct of Board members.

1. I will view service on a school board as an opportunity to serve my community, state, and nation because I believe public education is the best means to promote the welfare of our people and to preserve self-government.
2. I will work unremittingly to help the people in my community understand the importance of public education and to support willingly the highest level of education we can afford.
3. I will try to make decisions in terms of the best interests of the educational welfare of children. I will seek to provide an educational opportunity equally open to all children regardless of ability, race, creed, sex or location of residence.
4. I will recognize that my responsibility is not to run the schools but to see that they are well run. I will confine my board action to policy making, planning and appraisal.
5. I will refuse to represent special interests or partisan politics or to use the schools for personal gain or for the gain of friends or supporters.
6. I will arrive at conclusions only after I have discussed matters fully with members of the professional staff and board members. Once a decision has been reached by the majority of the board assembled at the meeting, I will support it graciously.
7. I will recognize that authority vests with the whole board assembled in meeting and that I have no legal status to bind the board outside of a meeting.
8. I will support Board decisions made by the majority of governing board members, subject to a board member's right to formally make a motion at a school board meeting to have the decision reconsidered or rescinded.
9. I will support and protect school personnel in performance of their duties. I will vote only for competent and trained technical and professional personnel who have been properly recommended by the appropriate administrative officer.
10. I will refer all complaints, including my personal criticisms to the appropriate administrative officer and only after failure of administrative solution will discuss such matters at a regular board meeting.
11. I will observe and enforce state laws and regulations pertaining to public education.

12. I will respect the limited intent and scope of executive session and respect privileged communications from executive sessions and other administrative sources.
13. I will respect confidential communications made during executive sessions held pursuant to SDCL 1-25-2 and shall not divulge privileged communications made during executive session held pursuant to SDCL 1-25-2 unless required by law, and shall respect confidential communications related to students and employees, and shall not discuss such confidential information at home, at work, or in public.

Pursuant to SDCL 1-25-2(1), the Board of Education may enter into executive session to discuss the performance of an elected school board member, which may include discussing a perceived or alleged violation of this policy. If the majority of school board members determine that a school board member has violated one or more provisions of this policy, the school board may, in open session, reprimand the school board member for a violation of the School Board Member Code of Ethics.

[Amended: February 9, 2015]